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*Agha*  
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INFO ROUTINE ISLAMABAD TEHRAN UKMIS NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON  
SAVING TO KABUL DELHI PARIS BONN AND UKDEL NATO

*MS*

YRTELNOS 359 AND 366: AFGHANISTAN

1. I CALLED ON CHATTY 3 JULY AFTERNOON BEFORE RECEIPT OF SECOND TUR AND DELIVERED MESSAGE IN FIRST TUR. LEAVING COPY OF MY SPEAKING NOTES.
2. CHATTY SAID THAT KARMAL'S INITIAL REPLY TO HIS INVITATION TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO GENEVA FOR TALKS WITH THE COMMITTEE OF THREE HAD BEEN PROMISING; KARMAL HAD OFFERED TO SEND DOST IN HIS CAPACITY AS A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE PARTY FOR A MEETING ON 25 JUNE. CHATTY HAD ACCEPTED. BUT KARMAL HAD SUBSEQUENTLY INSISTED THAT DOST COME AS FOREIGN MINISTER AND THAT THE TALKS WITH THE COMMISSION BE BILATERAL. CHATTY HAD REPLIED THAT THE FIRST CONDITION WAS UNACCEPTABLE AND THAT THE SECOND WAS ONLY ACCEPTABLE IF IT DID NOT RULE OUT CONTINUED TALKS BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE RESISTANCE, ALSO BILATERALLY (CHATTY COMMENTED THAT IT WAS IN ANY CASE FAR TOO EARLY FOR TRILATERAL DISCUSSIONS). KARMAL HAD NOT YET COMMENTED ON THIS REPLY, AND CHATTY THOUGHT THE CHANCES OF HIS DOING SO IN "ACCEPTABLE TERMS" WERE VERY SLIGHT.
3. CHATTY SAID THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THREE WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESS KARMAL FOR DISCUSSIONS ON THEIR TERMS BUT APART FROM THAT HE DID NOT ENVISAGE ANY OTHER MOVES BY THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE BEFORE UNGA. AS FOR MOVES BY OTHERS, HE SAID THAT THE WEST SHOULD NOT ASSOCIATE ITSELF PUBLICLY WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONFERENCE OR THE COMMITTEE: EVEN EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT (HE INSTANCED CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE VENICE SUMMIT) WERE EMBARRASSING BECAUSE THEY REINFORCED THE ARGUMENTS OF THE SYRIANS, LIBYANS, IRAQIS ETC THAT THE ICO WAS PLAYING THE IMPERIALISTS' GAME FOR THEM. WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS PARALLEL ACTION BY WESTERN STATES, HAVING THE SAME OBJECTIVES, BEING CAREFUL NOT TO OBSTRUCT THE ICO, BUT OSTENSIBLY FOLLOWING A SEPARATE LINE. HE SAID THAT HMG'S MORE DISCREET CONTACTS AND COORDINATION OF EFFORT WITH THE ICO WERE MORE HELPFUL THAN RINGING STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR THE COMMITTEE OF THREE, LIKE THAT OF PRESIDENT CARTER. HE THOUGHT THAT ONE AREA WHERE HMG MIGHT USEFULLY ACT IN THE PERIOD BEFORE THE UNGA WAS IN RALLYING SUPPORT AMONG NON-MUSLIM COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES. THE BATTLE AT UNGA WOULD BE MUCH HARDER THIS TIME: SOME HAD LOST ENTHUSIASM AND OTHERS WERE UNDER VERY STRONG PRESSURE FROM THE RUSSIANS.

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4. I ASKED CHATTY HOW HE NOW SAW ARRANGEMENTS FOR A TRANSITION FROM THE BARBAK KARMAL REGIME TO A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN. HE SAID THAT IT WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO ENVISAGE TRANSITION THROUGH A NEUTRAL PRIME MINISTER ACCEPTABLE TO ALL PARTIES. THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT WISH TO RETREAT IGNOMINIOUSLY: IT WOULD WANT WITHDRAWAL WITH HONOUR AND WITH EVIDENT JUSTIFICATION FOR ITS ACTIONS. HE THOUGH THE MOST LIKELY FAVOURABLE OUTCOME WOULD BE A LONG DRAWN OUT STRUGGLE, IN WHICH THE RUSSIANS WOULD NOT BE DEFEATED BUT IN WHICH THE RESISTANCE WOULD NOT BE CRUSHED. WHEN STALEMATE WAS WELL-ESTABLISHED THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER WAYS OUT: BUT THEY MUST FIRST BE BROUGHT TO REALISE THAT IF DEFEAT WAS NOT POSSIBLE, NEANTVIMTG WAS VICTORY. CHATTY THOUGHT THE WHOLE PROCESS MIGHT TAKE TWO OR THREE YEARS AT LEAST.

5. FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES.

GRAY

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]  
[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]  
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